

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

2019 FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

MISSION/GOAL STATEMENT

Provide the highest quality education so that all of our students are empowered to lead productive and fulfilling lives as lifelong learners and responsible citizens.

As the first session of the 116th Congress convenes, we urge the President and Congress to reaffirm their commitment to our nation's children by investing in public education.

FEDERAL EDUCATION RESOURCES

Exempt K-12 and workforce education spending from budget cuts under sequestration reduction or related budget balancing negotiations, and at a minimum, increase funding to meet increased costs due to inflation, increased number of students, and critical unmet needs.*

Increase the federal investment in public education to: fully fund the implementation of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and avoid provisions that would divert substantial federal resources into competitive grant programs:

- Increase the federal investment in IDEA to the guaranteed level of 40% of the costs to meet special education mandates and fully fund the government's promised share of ESEA.
- Increase federal entitlement funding to school districts through Title I appropriations for disadvantaged students, Title II for improving teacher/principal training and recruiting, and Title III for English Language Learners (ELLs).*

Oppose formula changes or the creation of newly funded programs that dilute or divert funding from high-need public schools, including public portability or any other private school choice programs that lack the same level of academic and fiscal accountability by which local school districts are governed.*

Support legislation that appropriates supplemental funding for school safety to support:

- school districts and local law enforcement partnerships to ensure that schools have well-trained and equipped police personnel to protect children while in schools;
- school infrastructure hardening needs for increased school safety; and
- mental health services for students with training of teachers and support personnel such as school social workers and counselors.*

Support increased federal funding to the United States Census Bureau for the 2020 Census to ameliorate the undercount of communities of color, individuals of immigrant origin, and individuals who are not yet fully fluent in English.

*Denotes priority item

ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION ACT (EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT)

Monitor the impacts of the reauthorized Elementary and Secondary Education Act (Every Student Succeeds Act 2015, or ESSA), and support legislative or regulatory modifications that provide adequate flexibility, guidance and support for local implementation and measures of progress for students and schools.

Protect the authority of local educational agencies (LEAs) under ESSA to exercise local control over the use of allocated entitlement funding, including Title I, without further federal or state restrictions.*

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Support the reauthorization and expansion of Early Head Start/Head Start programs that provide increased funding and appropriate early education standards that are aligned with state academic content standards designed to ensure school readiness.

Support federal funding to develop, expand, and enhance quality voluntary preschool programs while ensuring the adoption of developmentally appropriate early education standards that are aligned with state K-12 academic content standards.*

Support legislation that encourages states to develop and expand effective, innovative preschool delivery models that promote high-quality childhood education programs and ensure school readiness.

IMMIGRATION IMPACT

Address the financial impact of federal immigration policies on local school districts and the continuing demand for immigrant education and integration programs by supporting the Refugee and Entrant Assistance Programs under the Targeted Assistance and Immigrant Education allocation serving foreign-born students and their families.

Oppose formula changes that would dilute Targeted Assistance for counties with large refugee populations or limit funding allocations by excluding any legal refugees who have arrived in the U.S. in the past five years.*

Support future increases in funding for school districts during periods of immigration influx and a waiver of the award ceiling for high-impact communities. Ensure that later-arriving children of refugees are accounted for in whatever funding formula is used, without imposing a requirement of individualized documentation on school districts.

Support federal funding directly to school districts to address the burdensome costs of serving the needs of unaccompanied children arriving at schools to ensure districts' operational readiness.

Support provisions of a comprehensive immigration bill that supports English language literacy and technical training as well as the DREAM Act or similar legislation that would provide immigration relief to a select group of students who grew up in the United States, have good moral character, and are enlisted in the military or pursuing a college education.

Support existing regulations defining "public charge" that do not penalize for the use of public

**Denotes priority item*

services which positively impact the health and education of all youth in our public schools.

SCHOOL NUTRITION

Support the reauthorization of the Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act that:

- Provides program funds to support the costs of food service employees receiving training and professional development;
- Reduces costly and onerous mandates on school districts;
- Avoids new limits on the number of eligible participants, including higher thresholds for community eligibility, verification burdens, or limits on the frequency of applications; and
- Supports healthier eating options, such as non-dairy options, for students with increased federal commodity food allocation for school meal programs to off-set higher costs of purchased foods for districts.

MEDICAID REIMBURSEMENT

Oppose policy revisions to Medicaid that would cap federal support without regard to the actual number of eligible children or would limit the increase of health service costs below the medical inflation rate.*

Oppose any policy revisions that restrict or reduce school-based reimbursement for administration expenditures and certain transportation costs for services provided to low-income children with disabilities.

SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION/RENOVATION

Support supplemental allocations for large school districts with high levels of free- and reduced-price lunch participants to implement “green” sustainable projects, including upgrading technology infrastructure, replacing school buses or maintenance vehicles to improve operational efficiency and to reduce the carbon footprint, and extending the useful life of existing school buildings.

Extend the federal tax deduction (Section 179d) to encourage energy efficient building renovations.

STUDENT PRIVACY

Support reauthorization of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) in a manner that respects student privacy rights without burdensome administrative duties to local school districts, including administrative or legal requirements, or opt-out provisions that would jeopardize the role of educational research.

TECHNOLOGY IN SCHOOLS

Support increased resources with local flexibility and expand eligible expenditures to include educational linkage beyond the school for the Universal Service Fund Program (E-Rate) and streamline refund procedures to provide schools and libraries with affordable access to state-of-the-art networking and telecommunications technology.

*Denotes priority item

Support Open Internet legislation, policies and Federal Communications Commission (FCC) regulations to ensure that public educational uses are not prioritized behind paid commercial services.*

Support modifying FCC regulations to provide E-rate funding to school districts, not individual schools, to use based on needs as determined by the districts.

Redress disproportionate impacts of 2014 E-Rate Modernization Orders on high-poverty schools and large districts, including higher local contributions from the most-impooverished schools (Category Two services) and the budget impact of fully phasing down large-district legacy systems by 2019 (Category One services).

WORKFORCE PREPARATION

Support increased funding to meet the demands for workforce skills development under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act, and related legislation or initiatives, including programs that impact low-literacy and disadvantaged populations.

Preserve the role of district-operated adult education and job training programs.

HEALTH CARE

Retain tax-advantaged status of employee and employer contributions for healthcare premiums and costs including Health Savings Accounts (HSA) and Health Reimbursement Accounts (HRA) as well as Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA).

Delay or exempt school districts from the implementation of the excise tax currently scheduled to become effective in 2022 under the Affordable Care Act, commonly known as the Cadillac Tax.

PERSONNEL

Implement and fund strategies such as teacher fellowships and loan forgiveness programs and simplify eligibility and compliance requirements to encourage and attract talented students to enter into the field of education.*

Enhance resources to recruit, develop, and retain highly-qualified teachers in fragile or low-performing schools.*

STUDENT SAFETY

Support funding and legislation that establishes and expands programs to support increased detection and monitoring of fentanyl and other synthetic opioids.

Support legislation that prohibits the sale of e-cigarettes in misleading forms such as pens and USBs.

Support legislation that provides supplemental resources to assist school districts in deferring Internet crime and cybercrime through awareness and promotion prevention to our students, teachers, and parents.*

**Denotes priority item*

Increase funding and need-based grants that foster safe, healthy, supportive, and drug-free environments, so as to implement and expand interventions that focus on reducing disruptive and aggressive behaviors and strengthen students' emotional and behavioral competencies. Support juvenile justice reforms that strengthen educational outcomes.

Provide supplemental funding to create community-based networks that develops, coordinates and provides quality education, parental training, health care, housing, youth development programs, and employment opportunities to ensure safe neighborhoods for children and their families.

Support legislation or regulations that provide for enhanced scrutiny of foreign student exchange organizers and enhanced screening of U.S. host families, including fingerprint-based criminal background checks.*

Cybersecurity

Establish a statewide taskforce to share best practices and guidelines to protect student, parent, and employee information.